



The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is the state agency responsible for coordinating federal, state, local, voluntary and private resources during emergencies and disasters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MEMA provides leadership to: develop plans for effective response to all hazards, disasters or threats; train emergency personnel to protect the public; provide information to the citizenry; and assist individuals, families, businesses and communities to mitigate against, prepare for, and respond to and recover from emergencies, both natural and man made.

Get Our Emergency Notification App for Your Smartphone

One way that MEMA sends emergency alerts and messages is through a FREE smartphone application (app) called “[Ping4alerts!](#)” developed by Ping4 Inc. and MEMA. Go to our website (www.Mass.gov/MEMA) for more information or search for “Ping4alerts!” from your app source.



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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

**BE INFORMED.
MAKE A PLAN.
BUILD A KIT.
GET INVOLVED.**

This guide is a planning tool to help you and your family prepare for an emergency or disaster. Read and review this guide with your family and keep it in an easy-to-find location.

Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
www.Mass.gov/MEMA

Why Should You Prepare for an Emergency?

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) has plans in place to protect public health and safety, but taking responsibility for yourself and family for the first days of an emergency or disaster is the duty of every citizen.

Planning ahead for an emergency will give you peace of mind and can help keep your family safe. This pamphlet provides basic information regarding emergency preparedness for the citizens of Massachusetts.

Massachusetts faces risks from a variety of natural and man-made hazards that could result in an emergency or disaster situation. Regardless of the type of emergency, we recommend taking an “all-hazards” approach to preparation, including **being informed about potential hazards, creating a family communications plan, making a household emergency kit and go-bag, and getting involved in your community.** These actions can be the keys to ensuring the safety of you and your family.



For more emergency preparedness info, visit: www.Mass.gov/MEMA or www.ready.gov

Emergency Kit Checklist

- ☐ **Water** - 1 gallon per person per day for 3 days
- ☐ **Food** - 3 day supply of nonperishable foods that do not need cooking
- ☐ **Manual can opener**
- ☐ **Radio** (battery-powered or hand crank), **NOAA Weather Radio** and **extra batteries**
- ☐ **Flashlight** and **extra batteries**
- ☐ **First Aid kit**
- ☐ **Diapers, wipes, baby food, formula**, if needed
- ☐ **Pet food, supplies, tags and crates**, if needed
- ☐ **Prescription medications** and **extra eyeglasses**
- ☐ **Whistle** to signal for help
- ☐ **Moist towelettes, garbage bags, soap, hand sanitizer**, and other **personal hygiene items**
- ☐ **Wrench or pliers** to turn off utilities
- ☐ **Watch or battery operated clock**
- ☐ **Copies of important documents and IDs**
- ☐ **Cell phone & charger** (auto or solar charger may also be needed if power is out)
- ☐ **Cash**
- ☐ **Water purification tablets and household chlorine bleach**
- ☐ **Camp stove or grill** (outdoor use only) or **Sterno and waterproof matches or lighter**
- ☐ **Change of clothes and sturdy shoes**
- ☐ **Sleeping bags or blankets**
- ☐ **Disposable cups, plates, utensils and napkins**
- ☐ **Seasonal items** such as **warm clothes, hat and gloves** for winter and **sunscreen** for summer
- ☐ **Books, games, puzzles and other comfort items**

Place all items in a portable, watertight bin and store in an easy-to-access location.

Be Informed

Know what emergencies may occur and stay informed during the incident.

Massachusetts faces a variety of hazards including flooding, winter storms, hurricanes, power outages, tornados, extreme cold and heat, hazardous materials emergencies, terrorism, pandemics, and more.

Flooding risks are associated with many disasters. To learn more about flood risks, visit www.FloodSmart.gov.



June 1, 2011 Tornado in Massachusetts

Be aware of severe weather warnings and watches. Information can be obtained from media sources, the National Weather Service, weather radios, and others. Sign up for your community's emergency alerting system to get local information.

2-1-1 is the Commonwealth's primary telephone call center during times of emergency and is able to provide information on emergency resources.

Make a list of ways to stay informed during an incident if your power, internet, cable or phone service stops working.

Make A Plan

Plan in advance for what you will do in an emergency.

Create a Household Communications Plan. Since your family may not be together when an emergency occurs, it is important to know that everyone is okay. Designate an out-of-town contact for family members to call if separated during an emergency. Keep a list of important contact phone numbers. Consider using the American Red Cross "Safe and Well" website (www.SafeandWell.org) to locate family members and friends.

Have a **predetermined family meeting location** that the entire family knows.

Ensure that your plan incorporates the needs of specific family members such as **seniors, children, or people with disabilities**.

Create a Plan for Sheltering-in-Place. Sometimes sheltering-in-place is a recommended action. If instructed to do so, stay indoors, close windows and doors, and turn off heating or air conditioning systems that use outside air.

Create a Plan to Evacuate. Plan where you will go, how you will get there (methods and routes) and what you will bring (including your emergency kit). Not all shelters allow pets, so plan in advance what you would do with your pet if you had to evacuate.

Know the emergency plans of locations where your family might be (work, school, daycare) to understand what might happen during an emergency.

Build A Kit

Consider making two kits, one for sheltering-in-place and one for evacuating.

An emergency kit is intended to provide you with the essential items you would need for at least three days. While some items, such as water, food, first aid kit, sanitation items and clothing should be in everyone's kit, it is important to **customize the kit for the needs of you and your family**. Consider adding **medications, children's items, pet food and supplies**, and any other items that your family might need. See the emergency kit checklist in this pamphlet for more ideas.

If you have a well that uses electricity, fill your bathtub with water prior to an emergency for use during power outages.

In case of an evacuation, you may want emergency supplies. If your emergency kit is too large to take with you, make a "go-bag," which is a smaller, more mobile version of your emergency kit that you could take with you if you need to leave your house.

At least annually, check your kit for any food, water, batteries or other items that may need to be replaced or have expired.



Get Involved

Once you and your family are prepared for emergencies, get involved in preparing your community.

There are many opportunities to volunteer in preparedness and public safety programs. Citizen Corps is a volunteer program to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared. Visit www.CitizenCorps.gov for more information and for a list of programs in Massachusetts and their contact information.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program, under Citizen Corps, provides disaster preparedness and response training to citizens to improve individual and community preparedness. Many communities use CERT teams in support roles during emergencies and disasters.



There are many other volunteer and faith-based organizations that have a role in emergencies. Massachusetts Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (www.MassVOAD.org) provides information on many of these organizations.